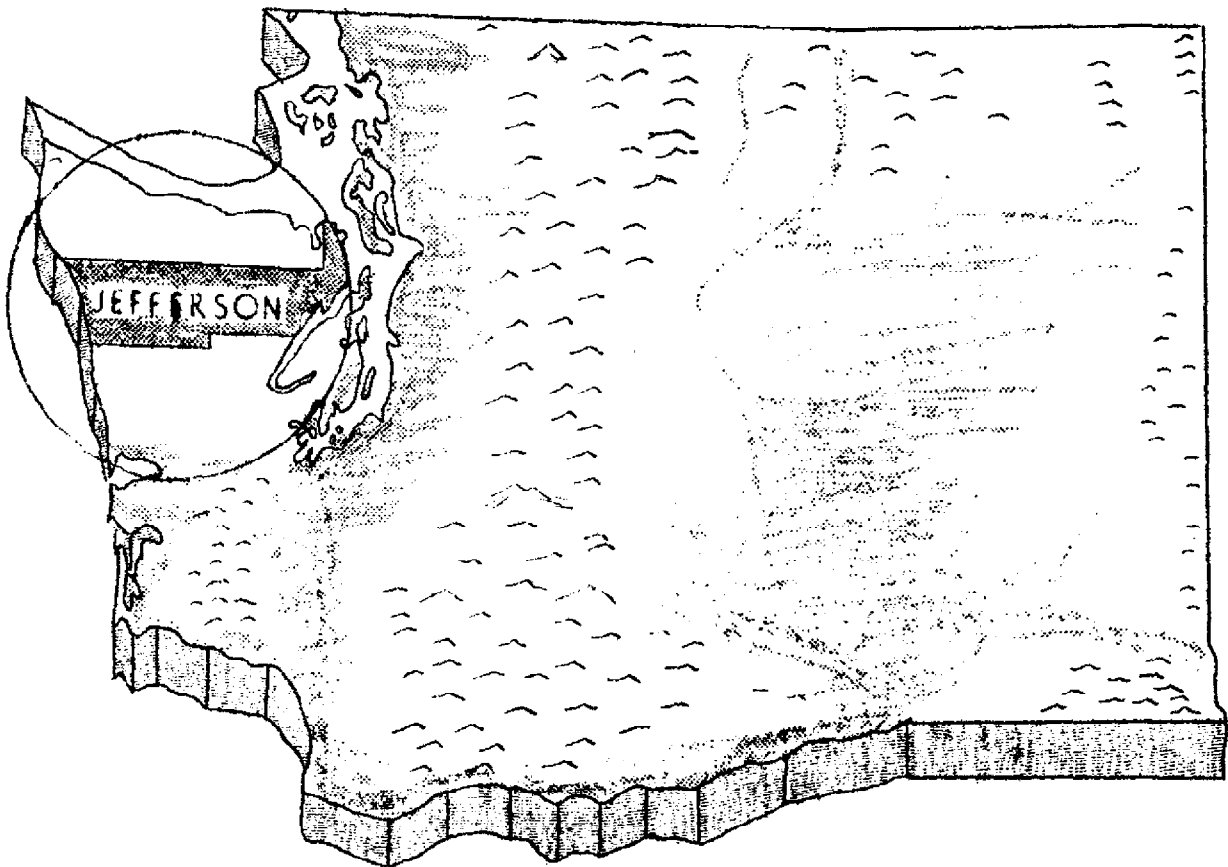


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# JEFFERSON COUNTY

## AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON

COUNTY AGRICULTURAL DATA SERIES  
1956



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
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## FOREWORD

This book on Jefferson County is one of an original series being devoted to the history and present nature of agriculture in each of the thirty-nine counties of the State of Washington. This project was initiated in 1956 through funds made available by Sverre N. Omdahl, Director, Washington State Department of Agriculture, 1948-56. State funds were matched by moneys from the United States Department of Agriculture under the Research and Marketing Act of 1946.

County agricultural data books are intended to serve a variety of needs. Continually changing conditions in a dynamic state such as Washington require constant planning by groups and individuals both in private enterprise and public service. Comprehensive knowledge of land resources, population and agricultural-economic trends in a local area such as Jefferson County is of great value. This book will be useful for reference in public and private instruction by vocational agriculture and social studies teachers in Jefferson County schools. It has been devised also to inform adults interested in knowing more about their immediate area, as well as persons and enterprises concerned with agricultural production and marketing or prospective settlement and investment in the county.

Carefully selected geographic facts, agricultural history, population trends and statistical data are included to give an over-all appreciation of Jefferson County. The enumerations of the United States Censuses of Population and Agriculture since 1860 and recent estimates of the Washington State Census Board are summarized to give a perspective of development since the establishment of Jefferson County in 1852. Facts on topography, soil, climate and forests which influence farming are integrated from surveys and reports of government agencies. Estimates of leading crops by years since 1939 by the Washington Crop and Livestock Reporting Service provide a measure of the trend in the agriculture of the county farm industry.

Acknowledgment is accorded the professional work of several persons. Immediate direction was under Emery C. Wilcox, Agricultural Statistician in Charge, Estimates Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Supervision, research and cartographic illustration was performed by Dr. Woodrow R. Clevinger, Market Analyst, Washington State Department of Agriculture. Mr. Richard Perry, of the Washington State Department of Agriculture, and Leonard W. Orvold, D. W. Barrowman and Edward S. Lippert, Agricultural Statisticians, Agricultural Marketing Service, United States Department of Agriculture, gave valuable assistance. The clerical staff of the Washington Crop and Livestock Reporting Service prepared tabular material for the book.

J. D. Dwyer, Director  
Washington State Department of Agriculture

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## PART I

## History of Jefferson County Agriculture

Introduction

Jefferson County, a land of forested mountains and seashores, is located in the central portion of the Olympia Peninsula in northwestern Washington. Being accessible to navigation from the Pacific, shoreline areas were explored and developed early in Washington history. Lumbering and dairying which were dependent on coastwise seaborne commerce were started in the Port Townsend and Port Ludlow areas before 1855. Primarily a forested area noted for logs, lumber, pulp and paper, the farm population has developed an important dairy and poultry industry which supplements the forest economy. The county was named in honor of President Thomas Jefferson when it was created in 1852.

The county is large and varied in topography, climate and soil. Jefferson is the only western Washington county which fronts both on the Pacific Ocean and the inland waters of Puget Sound. With a total of 1,812 square miles or about 1,159,580 acres, it ranks eighteenth in size among the 39 Washington counties and is larger than the State of Rhode Island.

A large part of the county is within the mountainous terrain of Olympic National Park and the population density is relatively small--only about five persons per square mile. In 1955 the population was estimated at 9,400 persons, ranking thirty-first among Washington counties. Farm population is only about 1,100, ranking thirty-seventh in the state. More than half the county residents are classed as urban. Port Townsend, the county seat, with an estimated population of 4,600 in 1958, has 52 percent of all residents in the county.

Jefferson County's economic history is characterized by an early period of lumber trade with San Francisco, ship building and homesteading. There was early specialization in dairying and livestock raising related to lumber mill settlements and shipping. Dairying has continued as the Puget Sound area market has become more populous. Lumbering and ship building declined from the early years and paper manufacturing, military defense activities and tourist trade have become more important. In 1950 farm income was far exceeded by other industries. The sales value of all Jefferson County farm products

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amounted to about \$839,300 for the year 1954, according to the Census of Agriculture. Nearly one-half of all farm income was derived from dairy products and the county ranked twentieth in the state's dairy industry.

### History 1/

Before its settlement by white men, present Jefferson County was occupied by two main Indian groups. On the Pacific Coast there were villages of Quileute, Makuh and Quinault who were seafaring and fishing Indians. Inhabiting the interior shorelines were related groups of Klallam, Chimacum and Skokomish of the Puget Sound Coast Salish. These Indians lived by fishing, hunting and wild plant gathering. Having access to abundant sea food, animals, wild plants and berries, they developed no agriculture until after contact with white fur traders and missionaries.

The coast and interior shores of Jefferson County were among the earliest Washington localities explored by Spanish and English navigators during the period of discovery between 1592 and 1800. The Pacific Coast portion of Jefferson County was explored as early as 1592 by the Spanish expedition led by Juan de Fuca. It was later visited by the Spanish expedition under Bruno Heceta in 1775 and the trading expedition of the English led by Captain Charles W. Barkley in 1787. These later expeditions were attacked by Indians at Destruction Island and at the mouth of the Hoh River. John Meares, another fur trader exploring the Northwest coast, named Mount Olympus, highest peak in the Olympic Mountains.

The eastern shoreline in the Port Townsend and Hood Canal areas was explored by the Spaniards, Francisco Eliza and Alferes Quimper in 1791. Anchoring in Discovery Bay, they used the bay as a base while charting north Puget Sound waters. They named Quimper Peninsula on which Port Townsend is located. Captain George Vancouver led a British expedition to Discovery Bay in 1792. He named Port Townsend, Point Wilson, Point Hudson and Hood Canal during his explorations of the inland waters.

The first official American expedition to study and map the area was the U. S. Navy group under Lieutenant Charles Wilkes in 1841. The Americans

1/ This historical summary has been derived from five sources:

- (1) Grace McMillan, Book of the Counties (Jefferson County Chapter), 1953 Yearbook Washington State Associations of County Commissioners and Engineers in cooperation with the State College of Washington, pp. 78-80.
- (2) Lucile McDonald, "Disappearance of a Lumber Town, Port Ludlow." Seattle Times Sunday Magazine, Nov. 16, 1958, p. 3. Seattle.
- (3) Works Projects Administration and Washington State Historical Society. Washington, A Guide to the Evergreen State, revised edition, 1950. pp. 544-548.
- (4) Richard M. Perry. The Counties of Washington (Jefferson County). Published by Belle Reeves, Secretary of State, State of Washington. Olympia, Washington, 1943. (Mimeographed.)
- (5) Ruby El Hult. Untamed Olympics, The Story of a Peninsula. Portland, Oregon. Binforde and Mort, 1954.

visited, mapped and wrote reports on the Puget Sound Basin's numerous islands, bays, inlets and rivers.

From 1800 to 1846 the Olympic Peninsula region remained an unchanged wilderness. Contact with civilization included occasional visits by fur traders of the Hudson Bay Fur Company and visits by the Roman Catholic priests, Father F. N. Blanchet and Father M. Demers. Blanchet established a mission on Whidbey Island in 1840 and began introducing agriculture to the tribes of Puget Sound.

American settlement in the present Jefferson County area was held back until 1846 by the strong British claim to all territory north of the Columbia River. Economic life in the entire Puget Sound area prior to 1846 was dominated by the Hudson Bay Fur Company through its post at Fort Nisqually in present Pierce County and land settlers were not encouraged to come north of the Columbia. In 1846 the dispute over the area was solved by a treaty between the United States and Great Britain which established the present Canadian boundary. This was followed by a wave of American settlers coming to Puget Sound overland from Oregon and from eastern United States by ship.

The earliest land settlers were encouraged by the Donation Land Act of 1850 and the promise of opportunities in trade and industry provided by the harbors and rich forest resources of the Port Townsend and Port Ludlow localities. These two ports were at the entrance to Puget Sound and early sailing vessels had already made them popular anchorages for discharging cargo and taking on piling, spars, furs and provisions for the coastwise trade with San Francisco.

In 1851 Alfred A. Plummer and Charles Bacheller arrived from San Francisco and took up Donation Land Act <sup>1/</sup> claims at what is now Port Townsend. They were joined by two pioneers from Portland, Oregon--Loren B. Hastings and Francis W. Pettygrove. Livestock raising and dairying were started near Port Townsend by Albert Briggs in 1852. Briggs drove 30 cattle overland from Portland to Tumwater at the southern extremity of Puget Sound and then floated this herd by scow to Port Townsend.

By 1852 there were over 200 American settlers at Port Townsend and along the shoreline of the Straits of Juan de Fuca. They petitioned successfully for a county government and the Oregon Territorial Legislature proclaimed Jefferson a county December 22, 1852, shortly before Washington Territory was established by Congress in 1853. Port Townsend became the county seat. At its inception this county included all of the Olympic Peninsula now within the boundaries of Clallam and Jefferson Counties. In 1854 Clallam County was separated from Jefferson with Port Angeles as its county seat. Boundaries between the two counties were established with some difficulty in dividing up the Olympic Peninsula. Jefferson County residents at Port Townsend desired a front or foothold on the Pacific Coast. Therefore, east to west boundaries following lines of latitude cut across the Olympic Range to include a wilderness coastal strip which had no settlers and even today is very sparsely settled.

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<sup>1/</sup> This Act provided a free grant of 320 acres to a single man and 640 acres to a married couple.

Settlement between 1852 and 1880 was largely based on lumbering, shipbuilding and part-time farming. Port Townsend grew rapidly as a key port of entry to Puget Sound. It was a U. S. Customs port and all vessels entering Puget Sound stopped or exchanged goods at this point. Residents of the city made plans and had hopes that Port Townsend would eventually be the major city--the New York--of the North Pacific Coast. Land speculation and a growing lumber and shipbuilding trade attracted several thousand persons to Port Townsend by 1870. The termination of transcontinental railroads at Seattle and Tacoma ended the boom period and the speculation that Port Townsend would become a major port city.

Port Ludlow became one of the early lumber milling centers of Puget Sound, Captain William T. Sayword and J. E. Thorndyke having erected a mill there in 1852. The Pope and Talbot Lumber Company later acquired the site and expanded it into a larger milling center as well as a shipyard building lumber schooners, tugs, barges and other craft. Port Ludlow remained an important lumber center and export lumber port in coastwise trade until 1935.

The thriving lumber and shipping trade at Port Townsend and Port Ludlow stimulated early interest in commercial agriculture in the Chimacum Valley and other farm districts. Supplying industrial and commercial workers and the provisioning of ships with dairy and poultry products, fresh meats, fruits and vegetables led to early specialization by farmers. Noteworthy among the first successful farmers were William Bishop, William Eldridge and R. S. Robinson in the Chimacum Valley. Each developed 160 acres between 1855 and 1865. Bishop developed one of the first farm-to-city milk and butter routes in Washington dairying, delivering dairy products by horseback to the mill towns and ship docks of this area and using special tanks slung over horses to transport fluid milk.

Federal military and naval activity became increasingly important because of the strategic location of Port Townsend. During the Indian War of 1855-1860 a U. S. Navy squadron was based at Port Townsend to pacify warlike Indians such as the Makah, Klallams and tribes of British Columbia who were raiding Puget Sound settlements at this time. Later, the U. S. Army established Fort Flagler on Marrowstone Island and Fort Casey on Whidbey Island as harbor defense posts commanding Admiralty Inlet which connected southern Puget Sound with the Straits of Juan de Fuca and the Pacific Ocean.

With a varied economy of lumbering, shipping, government work and agriculture expanding with each passing year, Jefferson County's population grew from 531 in 1860 to a peak of 8,368 by 1890. Collapse of the real estate boom resulting from loss of transcontinental railways anticipated to terminate at Port Townsend contributed to a decline to 5,700 in 1900. The Alaska Gold Rush, growing activity at Seattle, Tacoma and Everett and a decline of lumbering at Port Ludlow and Port Townsend also contributed to the decrease in population during this period.

Agriculture continued to develop on a more or less stable basis as employment in logging, lumbering and commercial activities fluctuated. More and more industrial workers were attracted to part-time farming while living on the land. Cut-over land could be acquired for less than \$10 per acre and after some improvement was suitable for dairy pastures, hay and oat crops. Many cut-over land settlers took up poultry raising. Numerous small dairy and poultry

farmers joined marketing cooperatives which hauled cream, milk and fresh eggs to the growing cities of Puget Sound. From 1900 to 1940 farm population increased and the number of farms in Jefferson County went up from 200 to 500. During this period timber and land companies promoted small farm settlement on cut-over lands.

By 1920 a pattern of dairy and poultry specialization and general part-time farming was well established in Jefferson County. According to the Census of Agriculture in 1920, farms in the county contained 3,100 head of dairy cattle, 680 beef cattle, 562 horses, 280 sheep, 1,312 swine and 16,500 chickens. Principal farm income was from dairy products at \$251,000 and from chickens and eggs at \$51,000. The main crops grown for use on farms and for sale were hay, potatoes, vegetables and berries.

During the 1930's and 1940's there was increased interest in poultry farming and dairying for the general Puget Sound region market. Ferry service to the Seattle-Tacoma metropolitan area was improved. Eastern Jefferson County became part of the milk shed of this urban market. Major pulp mills were built at Port Townsend and Port Angeles and population increased on the Olympia Peninsula. Tourist and recreational developments in Olympic National Forest and later Olympic National Park and improved roads stimulated commercial agriculture. Activity by the Army and Navy at Port Townsend and Bremerton and Fort Flagler also stimulated commercial activity in the 1940's.

In 1935 the Washington Cooperative Farmers Association established a poultry and egg receiving plant at Hadlock. Numerous high producing flocks were developed in the Hadlock, Chimacum and Marrowstone Island districts. During World War II turkey producers on Marrowstone Island sold over 25,000 birds per year. In 1957 cooperative farmers opened a new branch at Chimacum to service members producing poultry and eggs in eastern Jefferson and Clallam Counties.

In recent years farm forestry has been added to dairying and poultry farming in the agricultural pattern of Jefferson County. Much of the hilly cut-over land is within an industrial tree farm of the Crown Zellerbach Corporation which operates a large paper mill at Port Townsend. Numerous livestock and general farmers established tree farms and began managing them for sustained production of saw logs and pulpwood.

Agricultural development has been encouraged and guided by several agencies and private enterprises. The Extension Service through County Agents based at Port Townsend has provided technical guidance in agronomy, horticulture and animal husbandry. The Washington State University Experiment Stations System through its stations at Mount Vernon and Puyallup has provided highly important technical guidance in dairying and poultry raising. Private organizations which have improved farming and marketing include the Washington Dairymen's Association, the Dairy Herd Improvement Association and the Washington Farm Forestry Association.

Table 1.- Jefferson County's Rank Compared With  
Other Washington Counties

Item Compared	Rank	Quantity	Year
<u>General</u>			
Land area.....	17	1,159,680 acres	1954
Number of farms.....	36	356 farms	1954
Land in farms--percent.....	38	3.3 percent	1954
Average size of farms.....	23	107 acres	1954
Cropland harvested.....	37	4,591 acres	1954
Rural farm population.....	37	1,100 persons	1950
Total county population.....	27	11,618 persons	1950
<u>Cash farm income</u>			
Value of all farm products sold..	36	839,304 dollars	1954
Value of livestock sold.....	32	708,260 dollars	1954
Value of crops sold.....	39	22,341 dollars	1954
<u>Livestock on farms</u>			
All cattle and calves.....	38	5,770 head	1954
Milk cows.....	26	1,820 head	1954
Hogs.....	36	261 head	1954
Chickens.....	29	22,028 birds	1954
Horses and mules.....	34	166 head	1954
Sheep and lambs.....	30	619 head	1954
<u>Dairy and poultry products sold</u>			
Value of dairy products sold.....	20	438,392 dollars	1954
Whole milk sold.....	21	9,824,000 pounds	1954
Value of poultry products sold...	26	123,524 dollars	1954
Chickens sold.....	20	44,999 birds	1954
Eggs sold.....	27	183,061 dozen	1954
<u>Important crops harvested</u>			
Clover and timothy.....	24	1,821 acres	1954
Alfalfa.....	29	664 acres	1954
Fruits.....	30	112 acres	1954

Sources: U. S. Census, Agriculture, 1954.  
U. S. Census, Population, 1950.